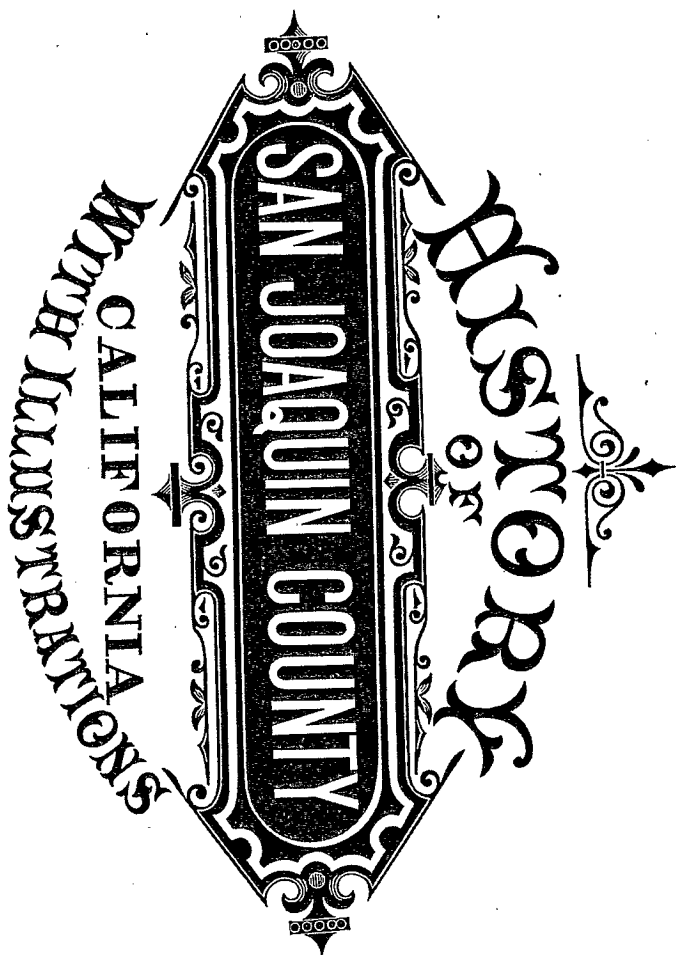


Reproduction of Thompson and West's



With Introduction by Robert E. Burns,
President, University of the Pacific

Howell-North Books • Berkeley, California • 1968

INTRODUCTION TO THE 1968 EDITION

by Robert E. Burns



When Colonel F. T. Gilbert wrote his introduction to the first edition of Thompson & West in 1879, he said that the plan of the history was "to give events in chronological order from the time the first white man saw the San Joaquin River until the close of 1850," which included the organization of California. Since no history of the San Joaquin Valley had been written up to that time, the author attempted to put the events of history in order without the benefit of historical perspective. He had only imperfect records to use for his research and relied heavily on his friends and the general public for information. Today, the historian has many more tools to use for his study, and in the past few years, great quantities of original material in the form of diaries and letters have been collected. The present-day historian has an easier time recording local history, but one cannot fail to admire the careful planning and meticulous care used in producing the *History of San Joaquin County*.

In glancing over the illustrations one must constantly admire the many lovely residences and the garden look of the towns of our valley county. It is hard to believe that without the Gold Rush, the San Joaquin Valley would not have prospered, for the climate alone would have attracted many people. The pictures were taken "from Original Sketches by Artists of the Highest Ability," according to the title page. Indeed, the reproductions of the sketches catch much of the feeling of the life of the early era and the costumes of the people alone are worth contemplation. Each detail is perfect and close scrutiny shows the people engaged in everyday activity characteristic of the time and place.

In 1825, Jedediah Smith entered the San Joaquin Valley as the head of a trapping party. He left in 1827, going out by way of the Sacramento Valley. We wonder what Mr. Smith thought of this fertile and well stocked

area, and we do know that he accompanied another expedition sent out by the Hudson's Bay Company part way to the San Joaquin. Talk around the campfire must have sometimes centered on the climate of the sun-drenched valley. Game was abundant here and elk and antelope roamed in quantity. Once, my good friend, Dr. Rockwell Hunt, told me of the fowl that filled the air during his boyhood days. In the time of our first white trappers, the sun must sometimes have been obliterated by the flocks of birds.

According to George Tinkham in his 1923 *History of San Joaquin County*, the wild roses and the blackberry bushes grew along the banks of the river here in great profusion. Mr. Tinkham also refers to the groves of oaks which supplied the lumber for homes, boats and fuel. Fortunately for us today, a few oaks survive.

The San Joaquin Valley with which this book deals was described three years earlier by Mary Cone in her *Two Years in California*, 1876, on pages 101 and 102:

"The San Joaquin has the advantage as to quantity and probably also as to the quality of land . . . Stockton is at the head of the valley and the entrepôt of its trade. . . It is a flourishing place of twelve thousand inhabitants. . . The rainfall in Stockton averages twenty inches. . . In 1872, twenty million bushels of wheat [were produced in the San Joaquin and Sacramento Valleys] . . . From the fraction of the San Joaquin Valley that was cultivated twelve million dollars worth of wheat was taken, equal in value to more than half the product of all the mines of the State for the twelve months, while the number of producers . . . of wheat was not equal to a tithe of those employed in getting the gold." Miss Cone was happy to live at such a time when man had learned to cope with irrigation.

So — it would be easy to muse on for hours about the wealth of the great San Joaquin — both in natural gifts and in man's contribution to the county. I am most

happy that Howell-North Books have decided to reproduce the volume of Thompson & West on our county. Surely historians everywhere should have the opportunity to learn about its story.

When Carl Ewald Grunsky wrote his "Stockton Boyhood" in 1959, he mentioned that the Indians probably were most familiar with the area because of the rich trapping and fishing, and sometimes, the Mexicans, under Spanish rule, left cattle straying in the valley and a number of wild horses were here. The fur trappers established a rendezvous at "El Campo de los Franceses", now French Camp, but Captain Weber's attraction to the "park-like" valley began the settlement.

Although Bayard Taylor was writing about the Santa Clara Valley, I should like to suggest that he might have been describing our valley when he wrote:

"The following morning, I resumed my walk up the valley. The soft, cloudless sky — balmy atmosphere — the mountain ranges on either hand, stretching far before me until they vanished in the purple haze — the sea-like sweep of the plain, with the islands and shores of dark green oak, and picturesque variety of animal life on all sides, combined to form a landscape which may have been equalled but never surpassed."

Too often we have dwelled on crime or unfairness in the history of the West. Here we have a book devoted to homes, business and to the Western character of the people. The history of San Joaquin County is changing, just as it was in the days of Colonel Gilbert. Since most people in our County are not native-born, this book on its history gives them a sense of belonging.

ROBERT E. BURNS, *President*
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC

Stockton California
January, 1968

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SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY,

HISTORICAL
OF

CALIFORNIA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS DESCRIPTIVE OF ITS SCENERY,
RESIDENCES, PUBLIC BUILDINGS, FINE BLOCKS AND MANUFACTORIES.

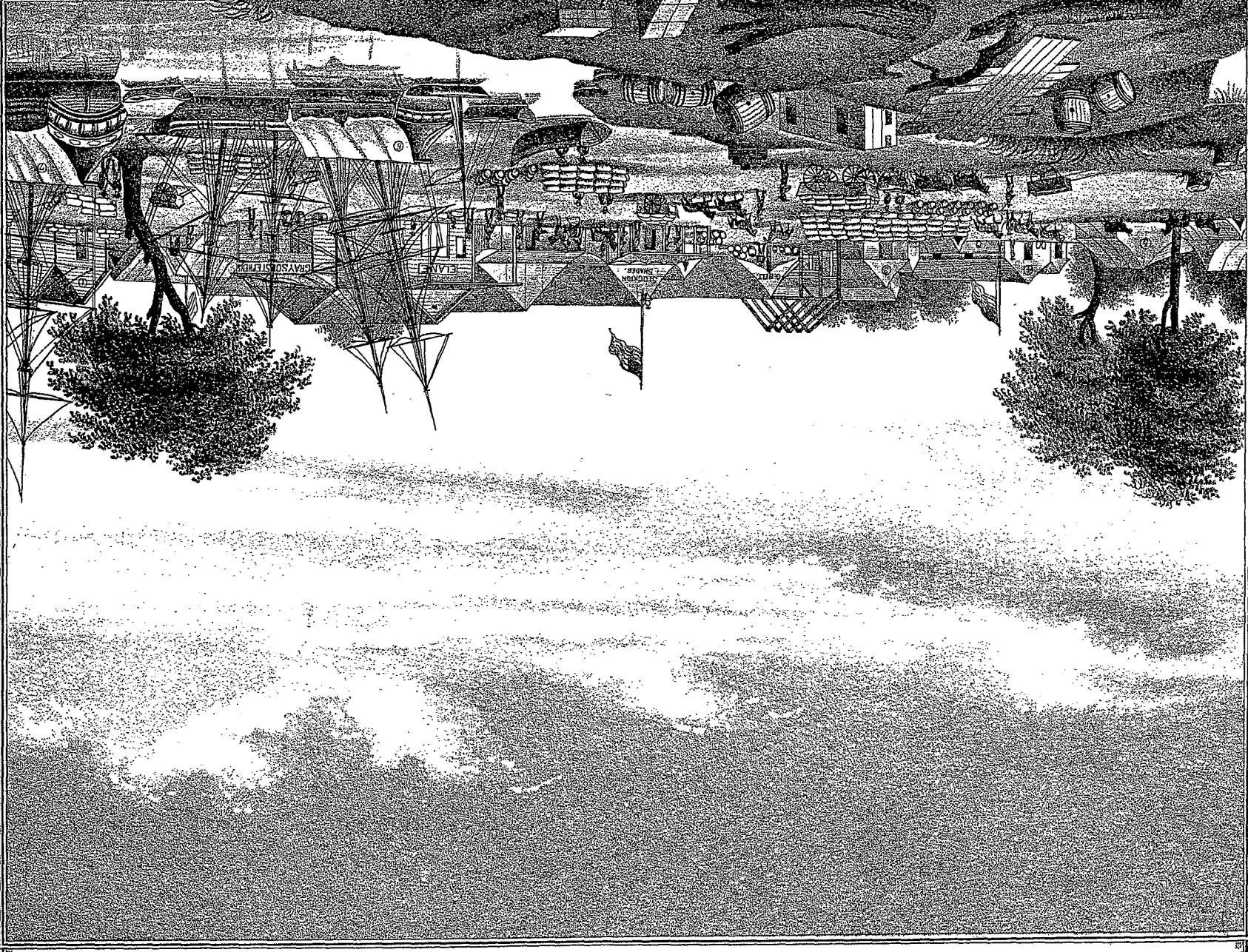
FROM ORIGINAL SKETCHES BY ARTISTS OF THE HIGHEST ABILITY.

THOMPSON & WEST,
OAKLAND, CAL.
1879.

THE ORIGINAL OF THIS WAS PAINTED BY W.H. CREASEY, FOR C.M. WEBER IN OCT. 1849 FROM A POINT WHERE THE WEBER ENGINE HOUSE NOW STANDS, THE ABOVE IS FROM A COPY PRESENTED TO THE PIONEERS AND

STANDS THE INDEPENDENT OFFICE. 3. R. PARKER, 4. BAKERY & HOTEL, BY STREET MURPHY & WHITEHOUSE, WHERE NOW 5. GOVERNOR EDWARDS. FACSIMILE OF A PAINTING, NOW IN POSSESSION OF THE SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY PIONEERS. 1. WEBER'S STORE, 2. TREE, WHERE N.E. COR. DEPOT NOW STANDS. 6. STORE SHIP. 7. PRISON SHIP.

STOCKTON IN 1849



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